

Recently, Department of the Interior (DOI) Secretary Ken Salazar [announced](#) changes to amend the rules governing oil and gas leasing on federal land. This announcement will result in more difficult, expensive and time consuming regulation obstructing the production of American energy.

I supported passage of the “Energy Policy Act of 2005” in order to encourage and expand domestic energy production. In particular, this legislation streamlined and expedited the process for oil and gas leasing on federal land. Through the use of this provision, the Bureau of Land Management’s permitting backlog was greatly reduced. This increased efficiency allowed environmental reviews of oil and gas lease sites to more than double. I am very concerned by the Administration’s latest attempt to restrict the use of this tool. It appears to continue an alarming [pattern](#) of blocking access to our abundant domestic energy resources at the expense of American consumers. I and many of my colleagues in the House and Senate communicated these concerns in a [letter](#) to Secretary Salazar. As oil prices continue to creep back up – twenty percent in the last month alone - we need to be doing all we can to encourage domestic energy production to avoid a repeat of the painfully high energy prices of 2008. I will strongly advocate for such as this issue continues to be debated and strongly oppose all efforts – such as [cap and trade](#) legislation – that will increase energy prices and hurt American families and businesses.